

Project Title: Service Area Competition
Applicant Name: Tennessee Department of Health – Gibson County Community Health Center
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Funding Requested: \$689,920

ABSTRACT

The Gibson County Community Health Center (GCCHC) received New Access Point funding in 2015 to begin providing services as a community health center. GCCHC currently serves Gibson County, TN as both a health center and a local health department. The Tennessee Department of Health (TDH) serves as a public entity co-applicant to support the center in providing services beyond the reach of the local health department. The new access point grant allowed GCCHC to expand primary care services to add to the traditional public health services and also expand to provide dental and behavioral health services.

Gibson County, Tennessee is located in rural Northwest Tennessee. According to the United States Census Bureau, as of July 2018, 49,045 was the estimated population for Gibson County. In 2017, Gibson County reported a median income of \$41,315 which is below the median income of \$51,340 reported by the state. The 2018 US Census Bureau data shows 18.1% of the county’s population to be 65 years and above compared to 15.7% for the state. The County Health Rankings by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation shows the current ratio of primary care physicians to population for Gibson County to be 1:1,900 compared to 1:1,380 for the Tennessee state average. Gibson County also has unfavorable rates for contributing health behaviors such as physical activity and tobacco use. According to the County Health Rankings, the physical activity rate for Gibson County is 39%, in addition to 22% of people ages 18 and over smoke cigarettes.

Gibson County is designated with a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) score of 16 and is defined as a Medically Underserved Area (MUA). Due to GCCHC’s service area being a low-income, rural community with a low ratio of primary care physicians to population, the services provided by the health center have become vital to the community. GCCHC has 1.6 FTE APNs providing primary care and a .4 physician splitting time between providing services to patients and serving as the CMO. GCCHC has a co-applicant model that easily targets unhealthy behaviors, such as physical inactivity and smoking, with primary care services and by also utilizing the public health initiatives established by the TDH.

With this award, the county, state, and federal collaboration will continue to allow for fully integrated preventive and primary care services for the area’s uninsured, underinsured, and all those needing access to a primary care home. The current patient target for GCCHC is set at 4,751 patients. The patient projections leading to this target were overestimated in the 2015 NAP and 2017 SAC applications. According to the 2018 UDS report, GCCHC provided services for 2,742 patients. Of these patients, 96% were at or below 200% of the poverty level; 47% were uninsured; 39% were TennCare, (Tennessee’s Medicaid); 10% Private Insurance and 4% Medicare. Due to not meeting the projected patient target, GCCHC is requesting a 25% reduction in patient target and will adjust the SAC budget to include a 2% reduction in requested funding.

By the end of 2020, the health center is projecting to see a total of **3,563** patients with **7,127** visits. This award will greatly impact GCCHC’s service area by allowing this established and respected health center to service a vastly underserved community.